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Pierre Charles, S.J.

THE LEARNED ELDERS OF ZION

INTRODUCTION

WE LIVE in a time when the fear of conspiracy is in the air. The free nations are confronted with a genuine conspiracy of world-wide range and unearthly danger, Communism, and it is all too easy for some people to detect its ramifications even where they do not exist. Persons who lack adequate and accurate information, and do not know how to obtain it, are particularly prone to this sort of suspicion and fear. They constitute what is called the "mass mind." Conventional, uninformed, uncritical, suspicious, and gullible, they accept as a substitute for established fact the rumors launched by individuals who claim to have "inside information," the sources of which, naturally, cannot be divulged. Such spreaders of supposedly secret knowledge cast themselves in the role of counter-conspirators, and people already disposed to believe in conspiracy as the one underlying cause of adverse events are equally disposed to believe the rumors spread by the "counter-conspirators."

And who are the villains in these conspiratorial dramas? They are likely to be persons or groups of persons who are "different," or "foreign," or otherwise outside the limited understanding or acceptance of the mass mind. Often such persons are identified only by labels which, repeated frequently enough and with sufficiently scornful an intonation, become fear-words and hate-words. At present such labels include not only "communistic," a title which identifies real conspirators, but "leftist," "liberal," "intellectual," and the like—which may not. The labels are pinned on any "outsider," who is subject to suspicion simply because he is not "one of ours." In normal times such attitudes are regrettable, but not of major importance. In times of stress, such as the present, they can lead to the infringement of basic human rights and freedoms, if not to actual persecutions and purges.

This tendency to blame all untoward developments, from the crash of an airplane to the fall of a nation, on conspiracy, is not new. In the late Roman Empire there were many who looked on the young Church as a

conspiracy, the aim of which was the destruction of Rome. How often have the Jesuits been accused of "secret power and plotting"! In the same way the Jews have been the perennial butts of the charge of conspiracy. The Nazi agitators in the 1930s portrayed them as the authors of Germany's disgrace after World War I. To the American Christian Fronters of the same period the Jews were the cause of the Depression. Even now it is not rare to hear of "organized Jewry" and the "controlled Jewish press," the "Jewish bankers," the "Jewish movie industry," and so on, always with the implication that the Jews are up to some devilry aimed at the damage or destruction of Christian society.

A classical and unusually noisome specimen of this sort of anti-Semitism is exposed in the following study, written by the late Pierre Charles, S.J., and published in 1938.¹ The "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" were from the beginning a fraud and a lie, propagated by a typically obscure, unscrupulous, fanatical rumor-breeder, and swallowed whole by easily frightened people all over the world. Published in the United States in the early 1920s and sold by the millions, the Protocols were exposed repeatedly, but the fraud was hard to kill, if indeed it is dead even now and not merely waiting for a new opportunity to arouse hysteria and hate.

Father Charles's exposé is neither the earliest nor the most complete. To mention only two others, published in this country, Herman Bernstein's *The Truth about "The Protocols of Zion"* (1935) and *An Appraisal of the Protocols of Zion*, by John S. Curtiss (1942), both give a more complete analysis of the hoax and its sources. Yet there are good reasons for making Father Charles's article (with a few added footnotes) available in English. For it is a monument to the honesty and courage of a great theologian and a great Christian, one who was for forty years professor of dogmatic theology at the Jesuit College in Louvain and who was the first to hold the chair of missiology at the Gregorian University in Rome. The Jews were ever the object of his Christian love and concern. He prayed for them to the Mother of our Lord: "You are indeed of their stock . . . you are of the house of David and of the tribe of Israel. It is impossible that you should not have a tender compassion for your unhappy people so often persecuted by Christians."² No wonder that the anti-Jewish measures of the Nazi tyrants in the middle '30s stirred him, as they did other Catholic leaders. In 1934, the year after Hitler's rise to power, the Archdiocesan authorities of Cologne, in an official publication answering Alfred Rosenberg's *Myth of the Twentieth Century*, expressly denied the authenticity of the Protocols and declared that

1. *Nouvelle revue théologique*, LXV, 1 (1938), 56-78.

2. Charles, *Prayer for All Men* (New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 1941), p. 121.

they should be banished from serious discussion.³ No less fearless, Father Charles published the present paper when the Führer's power was becoming more terrifying every day—when, in his own words, the Jews throughout Central Europe were "trapped, plundered, harassed, exiled, victims of 'Aryan clauses,' barred from the universities, relegated to ghetto benches, streaming out of Germany, Austria and Poland, with their synagogues burned, or closed, as in Russia."⁴ It is therefore because of, and not in spite of, the date of its first appearance, that this essay is memorable.

Yet it is not only the learning, the love, and the fearlessness of its author that give this study authority. When it was attacked, the editors of the review in which it had appeared—all of them Jesuit professors of theology at Louvain—in a rare move took up its defense and made its thesis their own. They concluded their statement with a note that should be as stirring now as it was then: "What we demand and insist on here is that all, Christians, pagans, or Jews, be given that elementary token of Christian charity, namely care for truth, the impartial search for truth; that they be given it in everything that concerns them. If the Protocols are a lie—and they are—Catholics and priests must be the first to say so and to say so aloud, because they are disciples of Him who is the Truth."⁵

WILLIAM GRANGER RYAN

IN OCTOBER, 1934, in Zürich, and in May, 1935, in Bern, a lawsuit was brought before the Swiss courts, with the Association of Jewish Communities of Switzerland and the Jewish Community of Bern as plaintiffs, and Theodor Fischer, former *Führer* of the Swiss National

3. *Studien zum Mythos des XX. Jahrhunderts* (Köln: Erzbischöfliches Generalvikariat, 1934).

4. Charles, "Est-ce bien sérieux?" *Nouvelle revue théologique*, LXV, 8 (1938), 969.

5. "Les Protocoles des Sages de Sion: Point final," *Nouvelle revue théologique*, LXV, 8, 1084. The English Jesuit review *The Month* of December 1938, in an editorial on "The Credulity of Anti-Semitism," endorsed Father Charles's findings and conclusions, and expressed its regret that Father Denis Fahey, C.S.Sp., in the "second edition of *The Mystical Body of Christ in the Modern World* still hesitates to disassociate himself completely from the puerile forgery called the Protocols of the Elders of Zion" (p. 491). And following on a letter by Father Edgar R. Smothers, S.J., who was the first in the United States to draw attention to Father Charles's study, the Jesuit weekly *America* of April 30, 1938, reiterating its own previous rejection of the Protocols, wrote in one of its Comments: "This Review believes that Catholics, so often the victims of bigotry and hatred in the past and still wrathful over the Klan, the dark horrors of the Smith campaign, the Black Legion and the Nazi persecution, should be chary of giving the least credence to similar attacks, similarly inspired, against the Jews" (p. 76). See also Dr. David Goldstein, *Jewish Panorama* (Boston: Catholic Campaigners for Christ, 1940), pp. 125-129.

Socialists and editor of the newspaper *Der Eidgenosse* ("The Confed-erate"), and Silvio Schnell, head of the National Front of Switzerland, as defendants. Fischer had published the Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion; Schnell had distributed them and put them on sale. In this, it was charged, they had violated the law against improper literature, *Schundliteratur*. The cantonal law of Bern provides penalties for *Schundliteratur*, but it does not define this rather vague term. In German, *Schundware* means inferior merchandise; *Schundpreis* what is dirt cheap; and *Schund* plain and simple means low-class goods, rejects, trash, a charlatan's remedies. The plaintiffs maintained that the Protocols, being a forgery maliciously attributed to the Jews with the intent of rendering them odious, fell in the category of *Schundliteratur*.

The arguments before the court of the first instance proved with dazzling clarity that the Protocols were indeed a forgery. On the 14th of May, 1935, the tribunal declared them *Schundliteratur*, handed down a stern opinion and, by virtue of the cantonal law of Bern, ordered Schnell to pay a fine of twenty, and Fischer a fine of fifty, francs. The plaintiffs had demanded nothing more. There was no question at all of an action for damages but rather of a simple application of the criminal law.

At once the defendants lodged an appeal, which was pleaded before the Supreme Court of the Canton of Bern on the 27th of October, 1937. Its decision, reversing the judgment of the lower court and acquitting the defendants, could make the little-informed public believe that the magistrates of Bern considered the Protocols authentic. Nothing could be further from the truth. The decision confirmed the judge of the first instance in his evaluation of their influence on the public.⁶ But the legal question arose: Just what is the *Schundliteratur* penalized by the cantonal law of Bern? The Supreme Court declared that, in the mind of the legislator, Article 14 of the cantonal law had to do with immoral or pornographic literature, and that the Protocols, though certainly a work of bad faith, a malignant and venomous forgery, be-

6. "It may well be asked," the court of appeal declared, "whether in the long run it is permissible to compel one part of the Swiss people (the Swiss Jews) to rely upon newspaper publicity and educating the people as defense against such an absolutely unwarranted and unqualified insult and besmirching," but expressed its confidence in the cool judgment of the majority of the Swiss people. See Emil Raas and Georges Brunschvig, *Vernichtung einer Fälschung* (Zürich, 1938), pp. 58-59.

longed, not to that obscene literature against which the Bern law wishes to protect the public, but to political literature, which the federal state and not the canton has the duty to watch over. But in order to show, within the limits of its power, its disapproval, the court, though acquitting the defendants, ordered them to bear all the costs of the defense.

It is certain that the judgment of the lower court risked creating a dangerous precedent. Almost all religious controversies would end by leading to the law court. Let a Protestant accuse Catholics of Mariolatry, of giving Mary the adoration due to God alone, and the judge, on the complaint of the Catholic, would have to hand down a judgment on "hyperdulia," the special honor and veneration of the Blessed Virgin. Let a Catholic declare Calvin and Zwingli guilty of heresy, and the court would have to pronounce on the orthodoxy of Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. One readily understands that the appellate court had to reject such a widening of the definition of *Schundliteratur*.

This decision, which was a great disappointment to the Jewish complainants, in no way affects the question of the authenticity of the Protocols. But it may serve as an occasion for an exposé of the question, a question which would have been solved long ago had passion not blinded so many minds.

THE SPREAD OF THE PROTOCOLS

IN 1905—the date is important—Sergei Nilus, a Russian, had printed in Russian at the government press at Tsarkoe Selo a book as strange in title as in content. In its preface he stated: "In 1901, I succeeded in obtaining from a person of my acquaintance . . . a manuscript which was put at my disposal and in which was exposed, with extraordinary precision and truthfulness, the Jewish-Masonic world conspiracy, which must bring our corrupt world to its inevitable ruin. This manuscript I submit here, under the general title of *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion*, to all who wish to hear, see, and understand." It ought to be noted that in Sergei Nilus's book the Protocols are but an appendix. The body of the work is a revised edition of another publication by the same author, which had appeared in Moscow in 1901 under

the title *The Great in the Little: The Coming of the Antichrist and the Rule of Satan on Earth*.⁷ The Protocols of the Elders of Zion were re-edited by Sergei Nilus in 1911, 1912, and 1917, always in Russian. A copy of the 1905 edition can be found in the Library of the British Museum.⁸

In the fall of 1919, a German, Captain Mueller von Hausen, under the pseudonym Gottfried zur Beck, translated, not, as is sometimes said, Nilus's book itself, but its appendix, that is, the Protocols, adding notes, explanations, and references of all kinds. The volume carries the title *Die Geheimnisse der Weisen von Zion*, "The Secrets of the Wise Men of Zion," and its pages 68-143 contain the Protocols as published by Nilus. Handsomely done from a typographical point of view, the volume is dedicated "To the princes of Europe," as a warning to put themselves on guard against the Jewish conspiracy which menaces thrones and altars.

Vigorously sponsored by the German nobility; backed by Prince Otto von Salm, by Prince Joachim Albert of Prussia, and even by ex-Kaiser Wilhelm, who recommended it to his visitors at Doorn; popularized in cheap editions; trumpeted by the *Deutsche Tageszeitung* of Count von Reventlow and by the *Kreuzzeitung*, which incessantly proclaimed the Jewish peril and saw in the Protocols the explanation of Germany's misfortunes—the work set out on a triumphant career throughout the world.

A Polish translation appeared in about 1920; three French editions followed one another in rapid succession; soon there was an English edition, three American, one Scandinavian, one Italian, and one Japa-

7. In the first edition of *The Great in the Little*, in 1901, Nilus declared that, through democratic institutions like constitutions, parliaments, universal suffrage, and universal compulsory education, the Antichrist had already conquered the whole of Europe. Only the holy rule of the Czar could halt the victorious march of the Evil One. And when the Antichrist appears in person, he will be welcomed and acknowledged by all the Jews, because he himself will be a Jew. With the help of secret societies, he will dethrone emperors and kings, and establish a universal kingdom—in this his chief tool will be the introduction of democratic institutions. All this, Nilus assured his readers (or rather, the one reader he had in mind, the Czar), he knew through the direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost. When, in 1905, he published the second edition, with the Protocols as an appendix, he pointed to the Protocols as the perfect proof of his inspiration. Is it too much to assume that in his obsessive fear of democratic institutions and in his urge to save Czarist absolutism, we have one of Nilus's hidden motives?

8. This copy is registered under the date of August 10, 1906. The number given it is C. 37. e. 31. P. 30679.

nese. In 1925 there appeared an Arabic translation, which naturally spread like fire in the Near East, where ethnic antagonism furnished it abundant fuel. The French High Commissioner of Syria forbade the sale of the volume, but its success only increased. The London *Times* of May 8, 1920, had an article full of alarm over this strange plot for which the Jews were responsible and the plan of which was found in the Protocols. For almost three weeks in July of the same year, the *Morning Post* ran lengthy editorials on it, which were soon afterwards published in book form as *The Cause of World Unrest*. An American edition appeared forthwith, and a special review was founded by Henry Ford to make the Protocols known and to proclaim the Jewish peril. This was the *Dearborn Independent*, whose subscribers almost at once numbered three hundred thousand. Its articles on the Protocols were also collected into a volume, of which more than half a million copies were sold.⁹

In a backflow, the movement crossed the Atlantic again and returned to Germany. The book Henry Ford had financed was translated by Theodor Fritsch under the title *Der Internationale Jude*, "The International Jew," and, since 1922, it has gone into twenty-one editions. After that came a deluge of brochures, digests, and commentaries. Of *Das Schuldbuch Judas*, "The Ledger of Juda,"¹⁰ by Wilhelm Meister, 150,000 copies were sold; of Alfred Rosenberg's commentary on the Protocols, 50,000. In his *Mein Kampf*, Adolf Hitler invokes the Protocols to justify special measures against the Jews. Here is one of the

9. Henry Ford has long since repudiated the articles which appeared in the *Dearborn Independent* and were collected in the book *The International Jew*. In a letter dated June 30, 1927, to Louis Marshall, then chairman of the American Jewish Committee, he wrote that he had given his personal attention to them for the first time. "As a result of this survey I confess that I am deeply mortified that this journal, which is intended to be constructive and not destructive, has been made the medium for resurrecting exploded fictions, for giving currency to the so-called *Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion*, which have been demonstrated, as I learn, to be gross forgeries, and for contending that the Jews have been engaged in a conspiracy to control the capital and the industries of the world, besides laying at their door many offenses against decency, public order and good morals. . . . I deem it to be my duty as an honorable man to make amends for the wrong done to the Jews as fellowmen and brothers by asking their forgiveness for the harm that I have unintentionally committed, by retracting so far as lies within my power the offensive charges laid at their door by these publications. . . ." Mr. Ford reiterated this stand on a number of occasions. See Sigmund Livingston, *Must Men Hate?* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944), pp. 46-47, 326-327.

10. The German word *Schuldbuch* means "ledger," but also "book of guilt." This choice of an equivocal word was probably deliberate.

passages referring to them: "How far the entire existence of this people is based on a continuous lie is shown in an incomparable manner and certainty in the 'Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion,' so infinitely hated by the Jews. They are supposed to be a 'forgery,' the *Frankfurter Zeitung* moans and cries out to the world once a week: the best proof that they are genuine after all. What many Jews may do unconsciously is here exposed consciously. But this is what matters. It makes no difference from the head of which Jew these disclosures come, but decisive it is that they demonstrate, with a truly horrifying certainty, the nature and the activity of the Jewish people and expose them in their inner connection as well as in their ultimate final aims."¹¹

In Belgium, the organ of the National Corporative League of Labor, with its two editions, *L'Assaut* and *De Stormloop*, reprinted the Protocols in installments, and did not fail to present them as a plan of general destruction of Christian society, thus "justifying" all preventive measures and all reprisals.

For this is the tragic knot of the problem. We deal here with no mere literary question. The hatred of the Jews, nourished by the publications which have multiplied around the Protocols, uses them to preach and practice violence against all Jews, to represent them as abominable conspirators, and to demand—either from the authorities or, if this be unavailing, from the faceless crowd—savage sanctions and collective penalties.

A FIRST GLIMPSE

WE ARE not yet examining the origin of the Protocols, but shall content ourselves for the moment with opening them and studying them in themselves. Unquestionably, they purport to be a sort of plan—both complicated and naïve—for the disorganization of society in order to bring about an absolute rule by the Jews.¹²

An unbiased reader cannot fail to be astonished by statements like these: "We shall create an intensified centralization of government in

11. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1939), pp. 423-424.

12. There are alleged to have been twenty-four meetings of the Learned Elders of Zion. The minutes of, or rather, the reports on, these meetings, are numbered, and make up the Protocols of Zion. In this paper, references to the Protocols indicate, by a Roman numeral, the meeting, and by an Arabic numeral, the paragraph of its "report" or protocol, in order that the reader may compare our quotations with any edition. We follow here "The Briton's" translation.

order to grip in our hands all the forces of the community . . . our kingdom will be distinguished by a despotism of such magnificent proportions as to be at any moment and in every place in a position to wipe out any *goyim* who oppose us by deed or word" (V, 1). "All the wheels of the machinery of all states go by the force of the engine, which is in our hands, and that engine of the machinery of states is—gold" (V, 6). "By all these means we shall so wear down the *goyim* that they will be compelled to offer us international power of a nature that by its position will enable us without any violence gradually to absorb all the state forces of the world and to form a super-government. In place of the rulers of today we shall set up a bogey which will be called the super-government administration. Its hands will reach out in all directions like nippers and its organization will be of such colossal dimensions that it cannot fail to subdue all the nations of the world" (V, 11). "We must be in a position to respond to every act of opposition by war with the neighbors of that country which dares to oppose us: but if these neighbors should also venture to stand collectively together against us, then we must offer resistance by a universal war" (VII, 3). "Throughout all Europe, and by means of relations with Europe, in other continents also, we must create ferments, discords and hostility" (VII, 2). "God has granted to us, His chosen people, the gift of the dispersion, and in this which appears in all eyes to be our weakness, has come forth all our strength, which has now brought us to the threshold of sovereignty over all the world" (XI, 8). "When we come into our kingdom our orators will expound great problems which have turned humanity upside down in order to bring it at the end under our beneficent rule. Who will ever suspect then that all these peoples were stage-managed by us according to a political plan which no one has so much as guessed at in the course of many centuries?" (XIII, 5-6). "When we come into our kingdom it will be undesirable for us that there should exist any other religion than ours of the one God with whom our destiny is bound up by our position as the chosen people and through whom our same destiny is united with the destinies of the world. We must therefore sweep away all other forms of belief" (XIV, 1). "And how far-seeing were our learned elders in ancient times when they said that to attain a serious end it behooves not to stop at any means or to count the victims sacrificed for the sake of that end. We have not counted the victims of the seed

of the *goy* cattle" (XV, 8). "When the King of Israel sets upon his sacred head the crown offered him by Europe he will become patriarch of the world" (XV, 23). "In a word, to sum up our system of keeping the governments of the *goyim* in Europe in check, we shall show our strength to one of them by terrorist attempts and to all, if we allow the possibility of a general rising against us, we shall respond with the guns of America or China or Japan" (VII, 6).

We may as well halt here with these monotonous quotations. Similar ones could be gathered from almost every page of the Protocols, and their constant repetition quickly becomes irritating. I reproduce these only as examples, and in order to show what feelings they are able to provoke in a credulous reader when they are detached from the whole of the Protocols, in which they float as in a pool.

But if the Protocols are studied a little more closely as a whole, it does not take long to see that these cynical plans for the overthrow of the world are of a pitiable poverty, that they swarm with contradictions, that they perpetually assume the greatest problems solved, and that the means they extol are of an altogether reassuring ineptitude. If these mysterious Wise Men of Zion own no other wisdom than what they parade in these pages, the world can sleep peacefully.

WORLD FINANCE

LET US take some examples. Four entire meetings, XX, XXI, XXII, and XXIII, are devoted to the financial program these Learned Elders will set up in their world super-government. They take pains to tell us, and to tell us again, that their whole policy rests on figures: "The sum total of our actions is settled by the question of figures" (XX, 1). There is not a single figure anywhere else in the Protocols. But let us watch the Wise Men at work. They will avoid burdening the people with heavy taxes, and will take care that the tax load be equitably distributed (XX, 2). As a program, this is not exactly new. They speak of a progressive tax on property as a stupendous innovation (XX, 3-4), and of a stamp tax covering all important transactions (XX, 12). "Just strike an estimate," they add with great naïveté, "of how many times such taxes as these will cover the revenue of the *goyim* states" (XX, 13). Money will be made to circulate (XX, 14). A court of account will be instituted (XX, 17), as if such a court existed no-

where and as if it were an institution unprecedented and unheard of. The monetary policy of the Protocols displays an ingenuousness which alone proves the incompetence and thoroughgoing ignorance of those who drafted them. That the reader may judge for himself, I quote: "You are aware that the gold standard has been the ruin of the states which adopted it, for it has not been able to satisfy the demands for money. . . . With us the standard that must be introduced is the cost of working-man power, whether it be reckoned in paper or in wood. We shall make the issue of money in accordance with the normal requirements of each subject, adding to the quantity with every birth and subtracting with every death" (XX, 22-23).¹³ This naïveté truly goes beyond all bounds: the problem of the creation of money and that of its distribution are confused; and the creation of new money in accordance with the ups-and-downs of the population is one of those discoveries only a perfect ignorance can make.

There is more and better to come. I quote: "Stagnation of money will not be allowed by us"—nothing is said of how this is to be accomplished—"and therefore there will be no state interest-bearing paper, except a one-per-cent series, so that there will be no payment of interest to leeches that suck all the strength out of the state" (XX, 34).

Still more of this wonderful stupidity. These Wise Men have the air of believing that the circulation of private money will suffice to assure that the state will always have enough of it in its coffers and be able to finance all its enterprises. And without troubling themselves in the least about the interest rate on the money market, they declare once and for all that, with the abolition of perpetual loans and government bonds, borrowers will infallibly be drawn by the offer of treasury bonds at one per cent. The Elders conclude this beautiful explanation by bragging that all this proves their genius and that they are God's chosen people (XX, 37). Further, they go on to show this genius with even greater clarity at another meeting when, referring again to internal loans, they declare that nowadays all these loans are consolidated by so-called floating debts (XXI, 8), which is almost as clever as saying that all the world dries its clothes by plunging them into the water.

13. Here "The Briton's" translation is not entirely clear. What is meant is that the Elders will issue a currency based on a country's working power, a currency in either paper or wood.

I ask seriously, where is the greenest candidate in economics who would have the slightest chance of passing an examination, however elementary, if he committed such enormous blunders?

Next their signs of genius in the organization of stock exchanges. "We will destroy all money markets, since we shall not allow the prestige of our power to be shaken by fluctuations of prices set upon our values"—what values? one must ask, since there will no longer be any government bonds—"which we shall announce by law at the price which represents their full worth without any possibility of lowering or raising. Raising gives the pretext for lowering, which was indeed where we made a beginning in relation to the values of the *goyim*. . . .¹⁴ These (our government credit) institutions will be in a position to fling upon the market five hundred millions of industrial paper in one day, or to buy up for the same amount. In this way all industrial undertakings will come into dependence upon us. You may imagine for yourselves what immense power we shall thereby secure for ourselves" (XXI, 10-11). How the government, unable to have recourse to loans, unable to levy any but very moderate taxes on the taxpayer, will make these marvelous hauls, the Wise Men do not confide to us. This is just the point. By the same literary device, a man could simply say that he was to be the ruler of the rain and the wind, and from having said so, conclude that the planet's fair weather and foul would henceforth depend on his will.

The Learned Elders of Zion, or, to be exact, the one among them who reeled off these beautiful discourses, goes on to say that he has endeavored to show to them their secret plans and their financial policy, and concludes: "In our hands is the greatest power of our day—gold: in two days we can procure from our storehouses any quantity we may please" (XXII, 1-2).

These, then, are the Jews who—according to all those who credit the Protocols—have exposed in them their financial program, their shrewdest notions. I ask: Is there, in any part of the world, a minister of finance, a banker, a business man, a simple reader who still has his common sense and who possesses the rudiments of economics, who would not judge this plan—if one can dignify it by that name—to be a rigmarole of stupid incoherencies? If there is in it even the shadow

14. The French translation seems closer to the "genius" of the original. It reads: "The rise is the cause of the fall, and it is through the fall that we have been able to discredit the public stock of the *goyim*."

of a financial policy, a single sensible or even tangible suggestion, and, above all, if the conspirators pictured here have delivered to us the secret of the system which must render the state safe from all bankruptcy and enable it to find unlimited wealth, without loans, without excessive taxes, with nothing but the little joke of treasury bonds at one per cent—quick, let's get going and all of us profit from the disclosure of this secret! No more budgetary deficits, no more unemployment, no more crises! All that is needed, so the Protocols say, is to issue paper money at every birth and recall it at every death, to replace the gold standard by the wood standard, and to fix the value of securities by law, without possibility of fluctuation.

This, then, is the silly humbug which millions of readers have taken to be a system frighteningly wise and around which there has been raised the cry of world peril.

It seems that the Learned Elders of Zion have foreseen all this. In fact, we read in the IX meeting: "You may say that the *goyim* will rise upon us, arms in hand, if they guess what is going on before the time comes; but in the West we have against this a maneuver of such appalling terror that the very stoutest hearts quail." Oh! What is this terror? I quote: "The undergrounds, metropolitans, those subterranean corridors which, before the time comes, will be driven under all the capitals and from whence those capitals will be blown into the air with all their organizations and archives" (IX, 13).¹⁵ It is as simple as that.

CHILDISHNESS AND CYNICISM

THE PROTOCOLS contain not only a financial program; the whole first part sets forth "the secret of the relations of the Jews to the *goyim*" (XXII, 1). It is here that the most cynical statements abound. When we try to understand the system expounded in the Protocols, it appears to be a defense of despotism, but of an enlightened despotism, which preserves the trappings of liberal rule and the externals of morality, and

15. Here the Russian forger shows his hand. Opposed to all technological progress, he sees in subways a Jewish plot, and it does not occur to him, nor to his Elders, that if the great cities are blown up, Jews will die with all the rest. It is not only subways that the forger, or whoever was behind him, dislikes. He dislikes all forms of modern education, for instance "object lessons." And whom does he make responsible for them? The Jews. For thus say the Elders: "The system of bridling thought is already at work in the so-called system of teaching by object lessons, the purpose of which is to turn the *goyim* into unthinking submissive brutes waiting for things to be presented before their eyes in order to form an idea of them" (XVI, 8).

which, unembarrassed by scruples, reserves to itself the whole reality of power. Since the people are stupid and worthless animals, they need a firm ruler, but this despot must not have the air of a tyrant, rather must he show himself under the guise of a protector. Indeed, in this first part of the Protocols, he is frequently called "President." Instead of declaring war, he will contrive to foment trouble among his neighbors, and then will not intervene except as a peacemaker. Instead of choosing administrators of integrity, he will surround himself with creatures who owe him everything and so serve him well. Instead of an independent press, he will manage to have an official press. Censorship will assure that nothing dangerous to himself be published. He will set up his own journals of opposition, which will say only what he permits them to say, but, because they will be thought free, they will have the more influence on public opinion. Nor will there be an independent bench: judges will be pensioned off at the age of fifty-five, a measure which will permit ever new appointments and thus leave room for favoritism. Rather than a national army, there will be a strong police force; and in order to draw public attention away from political questions, there will be the diversive maneuver of great public works. Commerce and industry will occupy people's minds, and in exchange for the liberties that have been taken away, they will be given abundant prosperity and well-being. "We have got our hands into the administration of the law, into the conduct of elections, into the press, into liberty of the person, but principally into education and training as being the cornerstones of a free existence" (IX, 9).

Amazing in this first part of the Protocols is the minuteness of certain details of organization and the incoherence of the whole. It will be the President's prerogative to appoint the presidents and vice-presidents of the Lower House and the Senate (X, 15), to propose temporary new laws, even amendments to the new republican constitution, and to decree right and justice (XI, 2). The number of representatives will be reduced; if, however, they persist in their opposition, they will be by-passed by an appeal to the whole nation (X, 15). The President will be "responsible" (X, 11)—to whom is hard to say, since the two Houses do not have the power to dispute measures taken by the government (X, 15). Then again, the editor of the Protocols does not know the least thing about political institutions, though he declares that everyone knows them. He does not even know the dis-

tion of the three branches of government: when he comes to enumerate them, he omits the judiciary power while listing the executive twice, under two different names (X, 8).

To keep the press in check, the Learned Elders have found no newer measures than the stamp tax, the deposit of bonds, fines, and suppression. All this is quite old and recalls particularly the legislation of the Second Empire in France. Finally, a last pearl among the many one could gather: whenever a crime is committed, Protocol XII enjoins, it shall be known only to the victim and to chance witnesses, these alone (XII, 19). Such enormous naïvetés are beyond comment.

The more one examines the Protocols, the more they show themselves to be absurd, contradictory, childish. This childishness is only thrown into relief by declarations of provoking cynicism. What remains is inept. See, for example, the new organization of legal proceedings, without distinction of civil and criminal: "We shall set the profession of law into narrow frames which will keep it inside this sphere of executive public service. Advocates, equally with judges, will be deprived of the right of communication with litigants; they will receive business only from the court and will study it by notes of report and documents, defending their clients after they have been interrogated in court on facts that have appeared. They will receive an honorarium without regard to the quality of the defense. This will render them mere reporters on law-business in the interests of justice and as counterpoise to the proctor who will be the reporter in the interests of prosecution; this will shorten business before the courts. In this way will be established a practice of honest unprejudiced defense conducted not from personal interest but by conviction. This will also, by the way, remove the present practice of corrupt bargain between advocates to agree only to let that side win which pays most" (XVII, 1).

An examination of the contents of the Protocols alone compels a first conclusion: they contain absolutely nothing which in the least resembles any plan or organization whatever. The authors are ignorant of the elements of finance; they have no knowledge at all of political institutions; they mingle extraordinary naïvetés with impudent pretensions. There is nothing constructive in them, not even in the preparation of the general destruction. Above all, there are flagrant contradictions. I defy anyone to draw from these pages, which claim to be a program, the merest shadow of a sketch of a program.

MYSTERIOUS PARALLELS

HENCE THE mystery thickens. Where do the Protocols come from? They exist. They were edited by someone. What is their origin?

Since 1905, Sergei Nilus has maintained that they were read in secret session at the Zionist Congress in Basel in August, 1897, and that their purpose was to unfold before the Jews, assembled at the bidding of Theodor Herzl, the general plan of Jewish world conquest. A secret agent, sent to this Congress by the Czarist government, is supposed to have made a copy and carried it off, and after grotesque adventures—told with important variations—the manuscript is said to have ended up in the hands of Nilus.¹⁶

There is no need, I am sure, to note that the first Zionist Congress had but a very limited objective: to examine the possibilities of a Zionist movement. The invitation, of which a photographic reproduction has been published, said that all sessions and discussions would be completely public; that those who called the Congress guaranteed that no government, and in particular not that of Russia, would be able to take offense at anything to be said or done at Basel; that nothing would happen which could put the participants in opposition to the laws of any country or to their civic obligations. No one has ever been able to prove that these conditions were broken in any way whatsoever or that a single secret session was held. But Nilus declares that there were

16. It is characteristic of the kind of literature the Protocols represent that its sponsors' statements about its provenance cannot be verified. Nilus himself gave various, indeed conflicting, accounts of how he came into possession of the Protocols. But all his accounts had one thing in common: the witnesses he cited were, even then, impossible to summon. A nobleman already dead at the time of publication, a lady whose name he had forgotten, a nameless member of the Zionist Congress, a secret agent whose identity was never revealed—these were the people who, Nilus alleged, were instrumental in bringing the Protocols into his hands. But the gullibility of his readers was put to an even greater test. In his Preface to the fourth edition of the Protocols, he said he had learned—"authoritatively from Jewish sources," of course—that the Protocols, as "a strategic plan for the conquest of the world," were worked out by the leaders of the Jewish people during the many centuries of their dispersion" (cf. *The Protocols and World Revolution*, Boston: Small, Maynard & Company, 1920, pp. 6-7). Butmi, another sponsor of the Protocols, was even more specific. Though written down only in our day, they were, he maintained, and others with him, first elaborated on Mount Zion, by King Solomon together with other Jewish sages, in the year 929 before the birth of Christ (cf. John S. Curtiss, *An Appraisal of the Protocols of Zion*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1942, p. 29).

some twenty-four. Of these twenty-four secret sessions, no one else has ever had the slightest knowledge; on the contrary, the testimony to this effect of journalists, stenographers, and no less of the participants in the Congress, as given at the libel suit before the Bern court, was absolute.

But there is really no need to dwell on this. For we know the source of the Protocols. On the 16th, 17th, and 18th of August, 1921, *The Times* of London published the whole story.¹⁷ Philip P. Graves, its correspondent in Constantinople, had come across a small volume in French, one of a number of old books that had belonged to a former Czarist officer and member of the political police, the Okhrana. In reading it, he saw at once that it contained a whole series of passages clearly parallel to the text of the famous Protocols. Though its front pages were missing, it was quickly identified. It was the work of a Parisian lawyer, Maurice Joly: *Dialogue aux Enfers entre Machiavel et Montesquieu, ou La Politique de Machiavel au XIX^e siècle*, "Dialogue in Hell Between Machiavelli and Montesquieu, or The Politics of Machiavelli in the Nineteenth Century." When it was first published, the author did not give his name but signed it "By a Contemporary." It was published in 1864 by A. Mertens, rue de l'Escalier 22, Brussels, and had iii and 337 pages, its preface being dated at Geneva on October 15, 1864. I myself have examined the copy in the Royal Library in Brussels, where it bears the inventory number III.2151. There is also an anonymous edition of Paris, 1865, and another, also without the author's name, of Brussels, 1868.¹⁸

The book's whole purpose was a violent satire on the policy of Napoleon III, who is represented as a despot making a show of preserving the appearances of a liberal regime. Napoleon's name is never mentioned, Machiavelli speaking in his stead. Montesquieu plays the role of the honest man scandalized by the hypocrisy and cynicism of his interlocutor.

A few quotations will suffice to establish the parallel between the

17. A lengthy excerpt from the articles in *The Times* appears in Herman Bernstein, *The Truth About "The Protocols of Zion"* (New York: Covici Friede, 1935), pp. 259-262.

18. A complete English translation of Joly's work was made by Dorothy Nash and David Bernstein, and can be found in Herman Bernstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-258. Though we have made our own translation, the numbers we attach to quotations from the Dialogue refer to the pages of this Nash-Bernstein edition.

Protocols and the Dialogue. The first pages were missing, as we know, from the copy of the Dialogue found in Constantinople in 1921. Well, the Protocols begin abruptly at the eighth page of Joly's Dialogue.

DIALOGUE

Let us leave words and comparisons alone, that we may cling to ideas. Here is how I formulate my system. (p. 83)

The evil instinct in man is more powerful than the good. (p. 83)

Men aim at power, and there is none who would not be an oppressor if only he could; all, or almost all, are ready to sacrifice the rights of others to their own interests. (p. 83)

What restrains these ravenous animals who are called men? (p. 83)

At the origin of societies, it is brute force without curb, afterwards it is the law, that is, force again, regulated by forms. (p. 83)

Political freedom is but a relative idea. (p. 83)

The state is lost, either by being divided, or by being dismembered because of its own convulsions, or by falling prey to foreign nations because of its own divisions. In

PROTOCOLS

Putting aside fine phrases we shall speak of the significance of each thought. . . . What I am about to set forth, then, is our system. (I, 1-2)

It must be noted that men with bad instincts are more in number than the good. (I, 3)

Every man aims at power, everyone would like to become a dictator if only he could, and rare indeed are the men who would not be willing to sacrifice the welfare of all for the sake of securing their own welfare. (I, 3)

What has restrained the beasts of prey who are called men? (I, 4)

In the beginnings of the structure of society they (men) were subjected to brutal and blind force; afterwards—to Law, which is the same force, only disguised. (I, 5)

Political freedom is an idea. (I, 6)

Whether a state exhausts itself in its own convulsions, whether its internal discord brings it under the power of external foes—in any case it can be counted irretrievably

DIALOGUE

such conditions, the people prefer despotism to anarchy. Are they wrong? (p. 83)

States, once constituted, have two sets of enemies: those within and those without. What weapons shall they use in war against the foreigners? Will the two enemy generals inform one another of their plans of attack so that each can defend himself? Will they deny themselves night attacks, snares, ambushes, battles in which the number of troops is unequal? . . . And these snares, these ruses, all this strategy indispensable to warfare, you do not want employed against the enemies within, against the disturbers of the peace? (pp. 83-84)

Is it possible to lead by pure reason the violent masses moved only by sentiment, passion, and prejudice? (p. 84)

Has politics anything in common with morals? (p. 84)

It is written: *Per me reges regnant*, which means literally: "God makes kings." (p. 112)¹⁹

PROTOCOLS

lost. . . . The despotism of capital . . . reaches out to it a straw. . . . (I, 8)

If every state has two foes and if in regard to the external foe it is allowed and not considered immoral to use every manner and art of conflict, as for example to keep the enemy in ignorance of plans of attack and defense, to attack him by night or in superior numbers, then in what way can the same means in regard to a worse foe, the destroyer of the structure of society and the commonweal, be called immoral and not permissible? (I, 9)

Is it possible for any sound logical mind to hope with any success to guide crowds by the aid of reasonable counsels and arguments . . . ? Men in masses and the men of the masses, being guided solely by petty passions, paltry beliefs, traditions and sentimental theorism. . . . (I, 10)

The political has nothing in common with the moral. (I, 11)

Per me reges regnant. "It is through Me that Kings reign." And it was said by the prophets. . . . (V, 6)

19. This faulty translation of Prov 8:15 is part of the satire, for it is Machiavelli who thus quotes Scripture.

DIALOGUE

Before thinking of changing public opinion, one must daze it, strike it with uncertainty by astounding contradictions, work on it with continual diversions, dazzle it with all kinds of different actions, mislead it imperceptibly in its pathways. (p. 117)

We content ourselves with registering here the result of some soundings. In the passages that are not quoted here, the dependence of the Protocols on the Dialogue is no less close. But let us go on.

I would institute, for instance, huge financial monopolies, reservoirs of the public wealth, on which the fate of all private fortunes would depend so closely that they would be swallowed up together with the credit of the state the day after any political catastrophe. You are an economist, Montesquieu; weigh the value of this combination. (p. 118)

It is superfluous to call attention to the naïveté of our forger and the rather awkward way in which his recital dissolves the figure of Montesquieu into thin air.

(My goal would be) to develop enormously the predominance of the state by making it the sovereign protector, promoter, and remunerator. (p. 118)

Here and there our little policeman adds a few tendentious words:

The aristocracy as a political force is dead; but the landed bourgeoisie, because of its independence, is still an element of danger-

PROTOCOLS

In order to put public opinion into our hands we must bring it into a state of bewilderment by giving expression from all sides to so many contradictory opinions and for such length of time as will suffice to make the *goyim* lose their heads in the labyrinth. (V, 10)

We shall soon begin to establish huge monopolies, reservoirs of colossal riches, upon which even large fortunes of the *goyim* will depend to such an extent that they will go to the bottom together with the credit of the states on the day after the political smash. You gentlemen here present who are economists, just strike an estimate of the significance of this combination! (VI, 1-2)

In every possible way we must develop the significance of our super-government by representing it as the protector and benefactor of all those who voluntarily submit to us. (VI, 3)

The aristocracy of the *goyim* as a political force, is dead—We need not take it into account; but as landed proprietors they can still be

DIALOGUE

ous resistance to governments; it may be necessary to impoverish them or to ruin them completely. For this purpose it is enough to increase the burdens which weigh on landed property, to keep agriculture in a state of relative inferiority. (p. 119)

The great industrialists and manufacturers will be dealt with advantageously by stimulating them to a disproportionate luxury, by raising taxes on salaries, by striking deep and competent blows at the sources of production. . . . A sort of zeal for freedom, for the great economic principles, will, if need be, easily conceal the true goal. (p. 119)

What must be achieved is that there be in the state only proletarians, a few millionaires, and soldiers. (p. 119)

PROTOCOLS

harmful to us from the fact that they are self-sufficing in the resources upon which they live. It is essential therefore for us at whatever cost to deprive them of their land. This object will be best attained by increasing the burdens upon landed property—in loading lands with debts. These measures will check land-holding and keep it in a state of humble and unconditional submission. (VI, 4)

To complete the ruin of the industry of the *goyim* we shall bring to the assistance of speculation the luxury which we have developed among the *goyim*, that greedy demand for luxury which is swallowing up everything. We shall raise the rate of wages which, however, will not bring any advantage to the workers, for, at the same time, we shall produce a rise in prices of the first necessities of life . . . we shall further undermine artfully and deeply sources of production . . . we shall mask (our real designs) under an alleged ardent desire to serve the working classes and the great principles of political economy about which our economic theories are carrying on an energetic propaganda. (VI, 7-8)

There should be in all the states of the world, besides ourselves, only the masses of the proletariat, a few millionaires devoted to our interests, police and soldiers. (VII, 1)

SLIPS OF THE FORGER

THE FORGER hired to render the Jews odious²⁰ did not always do his work with care. He read the phrases of the Dialogue askew. Here is an example:

It is necessary to incite abroad, from one end of Europe to the other, the revolutionary fermentation that is suppressed at home. Two considerable advantages would result from this. The liberal agitation outside makes tolerable the repression within. Moreover, in this way one keeps in check all the powers, among which one can create order or disorder at will. The important point is to entangle by cabinet intrigues all the threads of European politics in such a way as to play one power against the other. (p. 119)

Throughout all Europe, and by means of relations with Europe, in other continents also, we must create ferments, discords and hostility. Therein we gain a double advantage. In the first place we keep in check all countries, for they will know that we have the power whenever we like to create disorders or to restore order. All these countries are accustomed to see in us an indispensable force of coercion. In the second place, by our intrigues we shall tangle up all the threads which we have stretched into the cabinets of all states by means of the political, by economic treaties, or loan obligations. (VII, 2)

Obviously, what for Joly is a means the Russian has turned into a consequence. Having suppressed the first "advantage" of Machiavelli's policy ("The liberal agitation outside makes tolerable the repression within"), he introduces an "in the second place" in the middle of the next sentence. Could one be more lacking in intellectual scruples?

20. One way of rendering the Jews odious is to have the Elders of Zion speak abusively of the Gentiles again and again. The Protocols sneer, for instance, at "the bottomless rascality of the *goyim* peoples, who crawl on their bellies to force, but are merciless towards weakness, unsparing to faults and indulgent to crimes . . ." (III, 16). This is copied almost verbatim from the Dialogue, which makes Machiavelli sneer at "the unfathomable cowardice of humanity . . . servile in the face of force, pitiless in the face of weakness, implacable before blunders, indulgent before crimes. . . ." (Herman Bernstein, *op. cit.*, p. 102). The only real change is that where the Dialogue has "humanity," the Protocols have "the *goyim* peoples"—and here is indisputable evidence of the malice of the forger.

DIALOGUE

The power of which I dream . . . must draw to itself all the forces and all the talents of the civilization in whose heart it lives. It must surround itself with publicists, lawyers, jurisconsults, practical men, and administrators, men who know thoroughly all the secrets, all the strength, of social life, who speak all languages, who have studied men in all circles. . . . Along with this, a whole world of economists is needed, of bankers, industrialists, capitalists, men of vision, men of millions, for everything resolves itself basically into a question of figures. (pp. 120-121)

The nations have an indescribable, secret love for the vigorous geniuses of force. Of all violent deeds marked by the talent of artifice, you will hear it said, with an admiration that overcomes all blame: "True, it isn't good, but it is clever, it is well done, it is strong." (p. 129)

PROTOCOLS

Our directorate must surround itself with all those forces of civilization among which it will have to work. It will surround itself with publicists, practical jurists, administrators, diplomats and, finally, with persons prepared by a special super-educational training in our special schools. These persons will have cognizance of all the secrets of the social structure, they will know all the languages that can be made up by political alphabets and words; they will be made acquainted with the whole underside of human nature, with all its sensitive chords on which they will have to play. . . . We shall surround our government with a whole world of economists. This is the reason why economic sciences form the principal subject of the teaching given to the Jews. Around us again will be a whole constellation of bankers, industrialists, capitalists and—the main thing—millionaires, because in substance everything will be settled by the question of figures. (VIII, 1-2)

The mob cherishes a special affection and respect for the geniuses of political power and accepts all their deeds of violence with the admiring response: "Rascally, well, yes, it is rascally, but it's clever! . . . a trick, if you like, but how craftily played, how magnificently done, what impudent audacity!" (X, 2)

Joly's Machiavelli predicts his coup d'état. This evidently refers to Napoleon III's coup d'état on December 2, 1851. The Russian imputes this coup d'état to the Wise Men of Zion, without explaining what such a thing as a world-wide coup d'état could be. Machiavelli goes on, always followed step by step by the Czar's policeman:

I will have ratified, by a popular vote, the coup that I have carried against the state; I shall speak to the people in terms like these: "Everything was going wrong; I have smashed it all, I have saved you, do you want me? You are at liberty to condemn or to absolve me. . . ." (p. 130)

When we have accomplished our coup d'état we shall say then to the various peoples: "Everything has gone terribly badly, all have been worn out with suffering. We are destroying the causes of your torment. . . . You are at liberty, of course, to pronounce sentence upon us. . . ." (X, 4)

Generally, the Russian drops Montesquieu's replies and tailors Machiavelli's cynical remarks so that they fit end to end. In this instance, however, he did not happen to notice the change of speaker:

Machiavelli: I will establish a suffrage without distinction of class or property qualification, by which absolutism will be established in a single stroke.

Montesquieu, answering: Yes, for by one stroke you break also the unity of the family . . . and you make numbers a blind power which operates at your will. (p. 130)

We must have everybody vote without distinction of classes and qualifications, in order to establish an absolute majority. . . . We shall destroy among the *goyim* the importance of the family. . . . We shall create a blind, mighty force which will never be in a position to move in any direction without the guidance of our agents. . . . (X, 5)

The suffrage of which Machiavelli speaks is a clear allusion to the Napoleonic plebiscite. On his own, the Russian adds the tremendous ineptitude, "the absolutism of the majority."²¹ All the parliamentary organization with which the X and XI meetings concern themselves

21. Where "The Briton's" translation, which we follow throughout, has "an absolute majority," the French translation used by Père Charles has "the absolutism of the majority."

is copied from that of the Dialogue; and here again the not very clever forger has left his own mark on his work:

Thus one finds everywhere, under various names, but with jurisdictions almost always the same: a ministerial organization, a senate, a legislative body, a council of state, a court of cassation. I shall spare you the whole useless development of the respective mechanisms of these powers, whose secret you know better than I. (p. 132)

The French court of cassation does not correspond to anything organized in Czarist Russia; hence our policeman strikes it from the list.

It is impossible to quote everything; one really should print the two works side by side. But we must still point out that the whole legislation on the press is copied word by word from the Dialogue. The press shall be divided into official and semi-official journals and a sham opposition.

Like a god Vishnu, my press will have a hundred arms, and these arms will give a hand to all possible shades of opinion. (p. 153)

Under various names there exists in all countries approximately one and the same thing. Representation, ministry, senate, state council, legislative and executive corps. I need not explain to you the mechanism of the relation of these institutions to one another, because you are aware of all that. (X, 8)

Like the Indian idol Vishnu they will have a hundred hands, and every one of them will have a finger on any one of the public opinions as required. When a pulse quickens these hands will lead opinion in the direction of our aims. (XII, 12)

The same Vishnu appears again, and, for Joly as well as for the Russian, each of his hundred hands holds a spring of the social machine.²²

22. These are the exact words in the Protocols: "Our kingdom will be an apologia of the divinity Vishnu, in whom is found its personification—in our hundred hands will be, one in each, the springs of the machinery of social life" (XVII, 7). Here again the author of the Protocols apes Joly's Dialogue (cf. p. 188), but hardly ever has he slipped so badly. Is it possible that the supposed Learned Elders of Zion, who are portrayed as immeasurably proud of their Jewish heritage and who are said to be preparing the enthronement of a Jewish king of the house of David to rule over all the earth, would choose a Hindu god as the personification of their kingdom?

Like Vishnu, "trial shots"²³ appear in both:

I try combinations, projects, sudden decisions, in short, what you call in France trial shots. (pp. 154-155)

Trial shots like these, fired by us in the third rank of our press, in case of need, will be energetically refuted by us in our semi-official organs. (XII, 16)

The press will be afflicted by the stamp tax and the deposit of bonds (XII, 3), and "books of less than thirty sheets will pay double" (XII, 7). Joly and the author of the Protocols give the advantages of this system in literally identical detail.²⁴

The regulations concerning the legal profession, the enforced retirement of judges at the age of fifty-five, and all the benefits which absolutism will draw from such measures—these are almost the same word by word in Joly and the Protocols.²⁵ Only instead of abolishing the court of cassation,²⁶ the Russian abolishes the right of cassation (XV, 19), which is not exactly a stroke of genius. The policy of Napoleon III toward the papacy, the French garrison in Rome, the "guardianship" over the sovereign pontiff, are all found again in the Protocols. For the Russian did not take the trouble to remove the marks of the original when he made the Elders of Zion say: "When the time comes finally to destroy the papal court the finger of an invisible hand will point the nations towards this court. When, however, the nations fling themselves upon it, we shall come forward in the guise of its defenders as if to save excessive bloodshed. By this diversion we shall penetrate to its very bowels and be sure we shall never come out again until we have gnawed through the entire strength of this place" (XVII, 3).²⁷

23. Where our translation has "trial shots," the French of both the Dialogue and the Protocols has *ballons d'essai*, "trial balloons."

24. Herman Bernstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 147, 151.

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 167-168; XV, 14.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 170-171.

27. These words are nothing but a summary of Napoleon-Machiavelli's speech in the Dialogue, along with Montesquieu's replies: "The only role that I wish to bear . . . would be just that of defending the Church. . . . Not only would I check any enterprise against the sovereignty of the Holy See on the part of the neighboring states, but if, by misfortune, it were attacked, if the pope were to be driven out of the Papal States, as has already happened, my bayonets alone would bring him back and would keep him there always as long as I live." "That would indeed be a master stroke, for if you kept a perpetual garrison at Rome, you would practically have the Holy See at your command, as if it were in some province of your kingdom. . . . But if you should find a pope who resisted your intrigues and braved your anger, what would you do?" "In that case, under pretext of defending the temporal power, I would bring about his fall" (pp. 187-188).

Machiavelli does not forget the universities:

I consider it very important to proscribe the study of constitutional politics in the teaching of law. (p. 182)

We shall exclude from the course of instruction State Law as also all that concerns the political question. (XVI, 2)

And the reason is literally the same:

At the age of eighteen, one gets involved with the making of constitutions as one makes tragedies. (p. 182)

The universities must no longer send out from their halls milksops concocting plans for a constitution, like a comedy or a tragedy. (XVI, 2)

Lastly—for one cannot put down everything—here is this little typical phrase from among the passages which are strictly parallel:

After having covered Italy with blood, Sulla²⁸ could reappear in Italy as a private individual; no one touched a hair on his head. (p. 163)

Italy, drenched with blood, never touched a hair on the head of Sulla²⁸ who had poured forth that blood. (XV, 3)

Even the sequence of topics is the same in the Dialogue and the Protocols. The whole financial policy is described in Dialogues 18, 19, 20 and 21. These are chapters XX and XXI of the Protocols, into which the forger has mixed the absurdities already remarked, which alone should have opened the eyes of the least discerning. But he suppressed Dialogue 22, which speaks of Napoleon III's gigantic constructions and criticizes, without naming him, Haussmann's architectural megalomania. Do I have to continue? Those who deny the plagiarism have not compared the two works, or else their incompetence in matters of criticism makes it imperative on them to hold their tongues. Ahorse or afoot, truth has the right that its path be not hindered.

Per me reges regnant, "It is through Me kings reign," we read in the Protocols. That at the Zionist Congress of Basel, the Learned Elders of Zion should have quoted holy Scripture in the Latin of the Catholic translation is in itself enough to betray the forgery. The forger did not even take the slight precaution of quoting the sentence in the original Hebrew: *bi melakim yimeleku*.

28. Here is another striking example of slavish copying, which our present texts do not fully show. Joly's Dialogue carried the misprint "Sylla" instead of "Sulla," and early versions of the Protocols mechanically followed suit. Present-day editions, however, have corrected the error.

Worse still, he betrays himself by an error in date. At the X meeting, the Wise Men of Zion declare: "We shall arrange elections in favor of such presidents as have in their past some dark, undiscovered stain, some 'Panama' or other" (X, 13).²⁹ Of course, this passage is not to be found in Joly's Dialogue, published as it was in 1864; it is an addition of the forger. The only president of the French republic he could have had in mind here was Emile Loubet, elected on February 18, 1899, whom the people of Paris greeted, on his return from Versailles, with cries of "Panama, Panama!" What serious reader would not be certain that the passage in the Protocols was written after this date? But the Zionist Congress of Basel, where the Protocols are alleged to have been drawn up, took place in August, 1897.

The proofs of fraud are so overwhelming that even those most bitterly opposed to the idea have ended by admitting it. The desperate expedients to which they have resorted so as not to lose the poisoned weapon of the Protocols are based on no solid knowledge. Maurice Joly was a Jew, it has been claimed, and his real name Moïse Joël, and this in spite of the publication of his baptismal record, with the names of his godparents. But be he Jew or Turk, the nature of his Dialogue is not altered. It is nothing but a criticism of the "Machiavellian" rule of Napoleon III—a rule which came to an end in the military disaster of September 2, 1870—and in no way a program of reform or of world revolution.

It has been said—I have even received letters to this effect—that the Zionists gathered in Basel in 1897 purposely plagiarized Joly so that, in the event that their Protocols should one day be discovered, they could take cover behind the alibi and make people believe them a forgery. This is almost as clever as saying that the pyramids of Egypt

29. This is the background of the cry "Panama, Panama!" In 1885, Cornelius Herz, a Jewish adventurer, was commissioned by the bankrupt Panama Canal Company to obtain permission from the French Parliament for the issuance of bonds. Herz used for his lobbyist Baron Jacques de Reinach, also a Jew, who, in order to get their consent, bribed a great many of the legislators. In 1892, the whole scandal became public. Reinach, not, it seems, without Herz's harassment, committed suicide. The bribed legislators and the officials of the Panama Canal Company, who had approved the bribery, were called before a parliamentary investigation, but were treated very lightly. Loubet, then premier, had to resign on the ground that he had been negligent in the whole affair. When, in 1899, he became president, the crowds reminded him of the scandal by crying "Panama, Panama!" If we give credence to the Protocols, we not only have to assume that the Learned Elders of Zion were gifted with extraordinary foresight in that in 1897 they knew what would happen in 1899, but also that they did not mind at all smearing themselves by bringing up, without the least necessity, a scandal in which Jews were involved.

were built to serve as a bridge over the Danube, or that Notre-Dame de Paris is meant to be a fortress guarding the passes of the Pyrenees. As we have seen, Joly's book is nothing but a satire on the Second Empire. To say, then, that in copying this volume and adding to it cynicism and drivel, the Zionists transformed it into a program of world domination is pure folly.

Finally—for one must finish some time—the enemies of the Jews have asserted that the authenticity of the Protocols is an idle question, for even if they are false, the Protocols are true—true, since they are an exact portrayal of the Jewish way of thinking and acting. This is, for instance, the assertion of Adolf Hitler. Such an assertion evidently admits of no further discussion. If an accusation is based on nothing but itself, so that it is independent of all proofs, if these proofs can be destroyed without forcing the accusation to be withdrawn or modified, then there is no longer any criticism, any learning, any justice, and every calumny is permitted.

CONCLUSION

(1) IF THE Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion are taken as a program, they are nothing but a bizarre sequence of ramblings without significance, betraying at every step the incoherent thought of their editor and his ignorance of the most elementary concepts. No one could ever put this program into practice, for it swarms with contradictions and obvious inanities.

(2) It has been proved that these Protocols are a fraud, a clumsy plagiarism of the satirical work of Maurice Joly, made for the purpose of rendering the Jews odious, and exciting against them the blind and heedless passions of the crowd.

(3) The Zionist Congress of Basel had nothing, absolutely nothing, to do with the composition of the Protocols.

(4) The object sought by the authors of the fraud is open to discussion. It seems to have been related to the inner problems of the Russia of 1905 and the Czarist Manifesto of October 30 of that same year.³⁰ But in order not to mix conjectures with a conclusion clear in itself, we will not examine this point further.

30. The Czarist Manifesto of October 30, 1905, promised "true inviolability of person, the freedom of conscience, speech, assembly, and union" (V. I. Gurko, *Features and Figures of the Past: Government and Opinion in the Reign of Nicholas II*, Stanford University, California: Stanford University Press, 1939, p. 399). The Czar's concessions were followed a few days later by a wave of absolutist demonstrations and Jewish pogroms, organized by the police.

Far from being responsible for the Protocols, the Jews are really their victims, indeed their innocent victims.³¹ This must be said, and said aloud, out of respect for the truth, to serve which is our absolute duty.

A final thought. One might be tempted to discouragement on seeing that in our Europe, with its proud learning and its whole arsenal of historical criticism, a fraud so evident, the work of an ignorant and clumsy policeman, could deceive and still deceives millions.

Or should we not rather acknowledge the profound truth of Newman's remark that men never lack logic, that they are frighteningly, relentlessly logical? The disagreements which separate them are not at all derived from shortcomings in reason. They have their origin in an inner zone much deeper than that in which judgments are formed, in what Newman calls "assumptions," that is, orientations at once confused and imperative; there man engages himself as a whole, with his desires and passions, his fears and furies, even his dreams and his resentments. Starting off from these orientations, logic works its way through everything, caring but rarely to adapt itself to reality, but making everything it meets serve the conclusions imposed in advance.

Did not the Lord say to Nicodemus that before he could understand, he would have to be born again and strip himself of everything? But hatred is like the legendary garment of Deianira, which Heracles could not take off. Hatreds are, alas! the treasure man guards most fiercely, and fiercely he abuses those who would rob him of it.

31. The Jews are the immediate victims, but the unscrupulousness which created and spread the Protocols does not stop with them, for what at the start gives itself out as self-defense against the Jewish menace all too easily becomes, by an inner logic, aggression against the Church. Proof of this: in the forefront of the exploiters of the Protocols are anti-Catholics like General von Ludendorff, whose wife wrote "Deliverance from Jesus Christ," and Alfred Rosenberg, Hitler's philosopher, who called the Pope the "sorcerer of Rome," the crucifix an instrument of "power-greedy churches," and the Church "after demonic Judaism, the second alien system which has to be overcome" (Alfred Rosenberg, *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Munich: Hoheneichen Verlag, 1932, pp. 186, 467, 604). Once let loose, hatred cannot be halted: for reasons not only psychological but also theological, it will leap from the Jews to Christ and the Church.